September 30, 2021

The new COVID restrictions at Hamilton

by Zichu (Allen) Cao '24
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

PHOTO BY MAJA DOMAGALA

Students sitting masked in the Days Massolo Center.

After more than a year of abnormal learning and living on the Hill, Hamilton College is very slowly returning closer to normal this semester. The Adirondack chairs are replaced with more comfortable seating and Zoom is no longer the main tool of communication. Most importantly, there are finally smiles and laughter on Martin's Way, as students are not required to wear masks outdoors. However, although it is hard to admit, the pandemic is not quite over yet. On Sept. 16, the COVID-19 Task Force of Hamilton College posted a new weekly update, which stirred up controversies among Hamilton students.

I did not pay much attention to the email until I overheard several conversations about the new update. The main idea of the message from Karen Leach, the head of the COVID-19 Task Force, were usual reminders on proper mask-wearing and safe socializing. The update acknowledges the success that Hamilton College has achieved, but also states, "we cannot afford to be complacent."

Indeed, compared to many peer schools, Hamilton College has done a very good job this semester regarding COVID-19 with only four total cases. Colgate University, which is only 40 minutes away from Hamilton, had a spike of more than 40 new positive cases a couple of weeks ago. At the start of the semester, Colgate followed the lifted mask mandate in New York State but eventually had to reimplement it because of their spikes. Connecticut College, another NESCAC school, has had nearly 200 positive cases in the new semester and decided to move their classes back online.

Like most, I am not a big fan of masks. I very much enjoyed the period of time in summer before the new Delta-related waves started spreading in the U.S. I could go to gyms, malls and parks without a mask. I was disappointed to learn that we eventually decided to continue wearing masks indoors for the new semester. However, I would rather have a piece of cloth on my face than have online school like at Connecticut College. There are plenty of opportunities to take off the mask temporarily and enjoy a sip of coffee, until the new weekly update.

The aspect that stirred up the conversations that I overheard was the policy about drinking water. I have no doubt that the Task Force knows more science and practical examples than myself. As much as I appreciate and recognize the COVID-19 situation at Hamilton, the emphasis on no drinking in classrooms seems absurd to me. The logic is pretty simple: if I can eat in a dining hall, I should be allowed to drink water, which takes no more than a few seconds. What is more absurd than the rule is the fact that it may be enforced. I do not blame the staff members who told me to not drink water—I just want to question the Task Force's decisions. There are plenty of reasons to take a sip from my water bottle in a classroom.

As a liberal art institution, Hamilton College promotes student participation in class, which involves discussion and answering questions. To speak loudly and clearly to beat the masks, one really has to project their voice, which often leads to a dry mouth. For students who have back-to-back classes, this rule would mean hours of classes without hydration. One of the main benefits of in-person classes is the discussions that we can have. Plenty of water intake is necessary for students to be fully present in class.

Moreover, being dehydrated has a few major impacts on one's body, including the feeling lightheaded and losing strength. For student athletes or students that finished working out, their bodies would need gradual water intake for hours to help their muscles to recover. As the Delta variant and other mutations of COVID-19 rage through the U.S., the last thing one can do is weaken their immune system by not giving it enough support. Prohibiting drinking water and even eating snacks in buildings and classes is quite unrealistic, giving how small and unnoticeable these actions are. Compared to many other COVID-19 policies, this one feels very much like formalism. It is hard to enforce and easy to make excuses around it: "I just need my morning coffee!" Rather than nitpicking on something like this, Hamilton College can easily spend more time and budget on other things.

Opening up more dining halls, for example, would probably divide the congregated crowd in Commons or McEwen during peak dining hours. Certainly, there are complications with Bon Appetit and their staffing. If the school really is concerned about virus transmission because of a few seconds of mask removal to drink water, dining halls would be what they should focus on instead of classrooms.

Another thing that Hamilton can do is have more PPE stations around campus, like at the entrances of Commons, in case students forget or damage theirs. Rather than having to struggle to stick a piece of old clothes on their nose, a student can simply get a new one, which is more comfortable and provides better protection. Compared to last year, this semester has been much more exciting. This could not be done, undoubtedly, without the effort of students, faculties and the Task Force. Under the current circumstances in the country, it feels good to live in a relatively safe environment, and I hope it continues that way. It would be, though, more convincing if the College can focus more on practical plans than formalist rules, which only make students more inclined to do the opposite.

The Wellin Museum of Art presents: *Sarah Oppenheimer: Sensitive Machine*

by Katie Rao '24
A&E CONTRIBUTOR

Ordinarily, touch does not come to mind when visiting a museum exhibition, but *Sarah Oppenheimer: Sensitive Machine* deconstructs the boundaries that divorce the viewer from a work of art. Forbidden actions are recast into celebrated activities when exploring her work. Oppenheimer's exhibit is featured in the Dietrich Exhibition Gallery at the Wellin Museum of Art, and is a continuation of her works that were previously exhibited at Kunstmuseum Thun in Switzerland in 2020 and at the Carnegie Mellon University's Mill Institute for Contemporary Art in Pittsburgh in 2018. *Sensitive Machine* opened to the public on Saturday, Sept. 4, and will close Sunday, Dec. 5. Johnson-Pote Director Tracy L. Adler was the exhibit's curator.

Oppenheimer's instruments welcome and encourage visitors to engage themselves with artwork beyond their visual sense alone. *Sensitive Machine* requires interaction through touch to activate the movement of Oppenheimer's instruments. The exhibition contains four sets of dark, hollow beams pressed between white units and illuminated by bright lights. Without interacting with these instruments, the viewer might feel lost in this black and white geometric space. Visitors can understand Oppenheimer's work through their own touch or observation of others interacting with the instruments. When visitors interact with the inputs by rotating them on an axis, they prompt units in other parts of the gallery to traverse across the ceiling and light fixtures to travel up and down. A series of discreet pulleys decorating the ceiling are responsible for connecting the instruments. Searching for these pulleys requires visitors to tilt their heads back, a gesture reminiscent of childhood, a physicalization of Oppenheimer's desire for visitors to explore play.

When presented with an unknown versatile space, visitors experience their innate curiosity through the exhibition. The deliberate choreography of Oppeheimer's carefully-designed pieces redefines the static conventions of art and illustrates the fluctuation of the presentation space.

In the Wellin's exhibition video, Oppenheimer observes that screen-based technology restricts people in their actions and in their understanding of physical objects. *Sensitive Machine* reengages visitors by guiding them to interact with the heavy, hollow beams. Oppenheimer's use of weighted mechanisms forces visitors moving the instruments to move with them and experience the physical motion of the objects and their bodies. By removing screen-based technology, Oppeheminer demonstrates her intention for visitors to examine how their physical actions transform the space they inhabit.

Sensitive Machine is a playground for the imagination and acknowledges the results of an individual's actions on the physical world. But beyond the physical nature of Oppenheimer's work, *Sensitive Machine* demonstrates how human actions have consequences. As visitors navigate the exhibition gallery, they learn that the manipulation of one instrument activates motion in another.

However, when visitors interact with an instrument, the movement of another object in *Sensitive Machine* may be across the exhibition gallery and go unnoticed to the individual initiating the modification of the space. The proximity of the visitors to a given object when it is prompted to move influences their understanding of the cause-and-effect relationship as well. Visitors closer to the movement of an affected instrument will witness the change of that instrument more prominently than visitors closer to the instrument affecting others. While Oppenheimer emphasizes the significance of play and touch in her work, *Sensitive Machine* deeply explores these relationships of human action. More broadly, Oppenheimer's artwork points to the idea that the action on one individual here has an impact on the space there.

Adler will lead a Director's Tour of *Sarah Oppenheimer: Sensitive Machine* on Thursday, Nov. 18 at 5:00 p.m.

PHOTO BY WELLIN MUSEUM OF ART

Sarah Oppenheimer: Sensitive Machine opened at the Wellin Museum of Art on Saturday, Sept. 4, and will close Sunday, Dec. 5.

Film Club's autumnal screening: *Over the Garden Wall* (2014), dir. Nate Cash

by Katherine Kim '22
A&E EDITOR

On Saturday, Sep. 20, the Hamilton Film Club hosted a screening of the beloved cartoon miniseries *Over the Garden Wall* in Kirner Johnson 127 to celebrate the arrival of autumn. Like many other Film Club screenings, the E-board chose a theme for the screening and allowed students to select various films and shows to watch through a poll. Since last week's theme was autumn-centric media, most of the options on the poll showed films and shows that focused on the beauty of fall in their storylines. After a week of waiting, Film Club found that students overwhelmingly chose *Garden Wall* for their autumnal screening, over arthouse film *Autumn Sonata* and cult-classic favorites like *The Village* and *Miller's Crossing.*

Garden Wall is the first miniseries that premiered on Cartoon Network in 2014, featuring the story of two young boys, Wirt and Greg, trying to find their way home through a mysterious forest called "the Unknown." Along their journey, they encounter multiple intriguing characters—a paranoid Woodsman, a Pumpkin-wearing cult, and a talking bluebird named Beatrice, who later turns into one of the boys' traveling companions. Though the show has a simple premise, it delves into themes of finding identity, coping with grief, and most importantly, valuing family no matter what said family might look like. This show emphasizes the brotherhood between Wirt and Greg, but also focuses on the families of many others in "the Unknown." From the Pumpkin-wearing farmers in their strong rural community, to Beatrice's single mother taking care of her many children, the show allows audiences to understand that family can look different than just the nuclear family unit.

The autumnal theme of *Garden Wall* reveals itself in every frame of the show. The forest of "the Unknown" does not have greenery; instead, it has trees brimming with golden and orange leaves, or barren branches waiting to entrap those who walk past them, capturing the color palette of fall perfectly. It simultaneously incorporates some of the many familiar aspects of autumn that people know and love. In various episodes, *Garden Wall* features pumpkin head carvings, monstrous beasts and ghosts that lurk at night, and people surrounding warm fires telling ghost stories—all images associated with Halloween and the coming of fall.

While the art and colors of *Garden Wall* match the theme of autumn well, the score of *Garden Wall* is also aptly fitting to the season of fall. The Blasting Company primarily created all the music of the show, and occasionally featured singers in their work, including Audrey Wasilewski and Mark Bodnar. The instrumentals of *Garden Wall* involves haunting piano and brass melodies to reflect the colder and more chilling atmospheres that autumn brings, while the songs consist of eerie lyrics, including warnings against the Old North Wind and some ominous verses of a formless Beast turning wandering travelers into trees.

When it was first released in 2014, the show received critical acclaim from *The A.V. Club*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and many other well-known publications. However, public love for *Garden Wall* appears to have grown exponentially over the years, especially with people constantly rediscovering the show through social media circles. Currently, *Garden Wall* not only has the reputation of a critically acclaimed miniseries, but also as a classic media staple to herald the beginning of fall. Though the show premiered nearly seven years ago, both critics and watchers alike continue to heap praise upon it and often consider it as the epitome of what autumn represents, which explains why Hamilton students chose it for this autumnal Film Club screening.

For those interested in watching this miniseries that feels like the perfect ode to autumn, *Over the Garden Wall* is currently streaming on HBO Max and Hulu.

PHOTO BY CARTOON NETWORK

Wirt, Greg and Beatrice on their journey through "the Unknown."

PHOTO BY CARTOON NETWORK

Pumpkin farmers in the second episode, *Hard Times at the Huskin' Bee.*

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QUESTIONS?: Katheryn Doran, Program Director (kdoran@hamilton.edu)

Athlete Spotlight: Rylie Mutton '23

by Sam Dils '22
SPORTS EDITOR

The women's soccer team is off to a tremendous start this season, with an unbeaten 5-0-2 record (3-0-2 in the NESCAC). One of the big reasons behind the team's success has been midfielder Rylie Mutton '23. Mutton has already scored four goals this season, including two huge overtime game-winners against Amherst on Sept. 18 and Middlebury this past weekend on Sep. 25. Along the way, she has earned one NESCAC Player of the Week award. *The Spectator* sat down with Mutton to discuss her and her team's success as they look to contend for a NESCAC title.

With a 5-0-2 record and some huge wins in the NESCAC, how does it feel to be off to such a strong start to the season?
It's definitely been an exciting three or four weeks with the results we've been getting, especially since we lost to Williams and Amherst and tied Middlebury 2 years ago, but it's looking like the NESCAC is going to be very competitive this season. We have to find the balance between celebrating our recent victories and staying focused on our upcoming games against a powerhouse Tufts and some rising teams like Wesleyan and Trinity.

You have provided a lot of offense already this year, including several game-winning goals. How have you personally been able to take that step up on the field?
My freshman year, I played a more defensive role as a midfielder because we had two senior midfielders that were very offensive. I knew that after they graduated, I would have to step up and contribute some goals, and I feel very lucky and grateful that my goals have been coming in when the team really needs it. I definitely could not have stepped up without my teammates around me, and I hope that we as a team can keep producing goals and results throughout the rest of the season.

Two of your team's NESCAC wins have come in overtime. What does it say about the team that you've been able to battle to these hard-fought victories?
It's definitely a reflection on our defense and goalkeepers, who save us time and time again from shots and breakaways late in the game. Even after playing 90 minutes without a substitute, I know that the girls behind me will put their all into making that last sprint to save the game. These victories also say a lot about our sideline. At any point in the game, whoever is on the bench is always cheering louder than our opponents. The energy alone helps us carry out a tie or grind out a win.

How long do you think your unbeaten streak can continue?
I truly believe that the way that we're playing right now still isn't us at our peak, but I can see that we're working quickly toward it. I would be nervous if I was another NESCAC team looking at us on their upcoming schedules.

COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Rylie Mutton '23 dribbles up the field in a home game.

What are your team's goals for the rest of the season?
Two years ago, we finished fifth in the NESCAC, and we decided from day one that our most important goal is to finish at least one spot higher. So fourth in the NESCAC and a good NESCAC tournament run is the overall goal, with the thought of getting an at-large bid to NCAAs still in mind as the dream. We still have to focus on every game along the way in order to achieve those goals, so right now Sage Colleges on Sept. 29 and then our Colby/Tufts double header the weekend of Oct. 2-3 is what our focus is on.

Lightning Round

Most underrated part of the soccer season?
Team dinners and breakfasts; I can guarantee there is never a boring second with this team.

Teammate with a secret talent?
Ask Frankie Lilly '23 to breakdance... pretty cool.

Best road trip movie?
Definitely a tough question but I have to go with Cars. Don't come after me—it's a classic.

Favorite game day meal?
I rely too heavily on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. It's been a tradition ever since I started club soccer when I was younger to always eat one before a game, even when that game might be at 8am.

Any pregame superstitions?
Too many to list here, but some major ones: always starting with the left leg when getting ready, so left sock before right sock, left cleat before right cleat, and left shin guard before right shin guard, my PB&J (of course), and watching Catarina Macario highlights because she is a scoring beast and I need the inspiration. watching Catarina Macario highlights because she is a scoring beast and I need the inspiration.

Football Suffers Loss at Wesleyan

By Simon Hoke '24
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

In their first away trip of the season, Hamilton football took on the Wesleyan University Cardinals on Saturday, Sept. 25. Hamilton fell behind early, finding themselves down 27-0 in the third quarter, but they fought back late in the game. The game ended 30-14 in Wesleyan's favor.

The Cardinals came out flying on offense, scoring on their first drive after 11 plays and 86 yards. Wesleyan quarterback David Estevez finished off the drive with a 10-yard touchdown pass to tight end Matt Lutenberger. This was the only successful drive completed in a slow-paced first quarter.

The Cardinals' second touchdown came at the 13:43 mark in the second quarter. This time it was Wesleyan quarterback Ashton Scott who found wide receiver Logan Tomlinson to make it a two-possession game. The Continentals struggled on offense in the first half, punting on their first three possessions, and the Cardinals capitalized on another red-zone opportunity late in the half. Scott connected with receiver Matt Simco to give his team a 20-0 lead going into the break.

Wesleyan continued in the second half where they left off in the first. This time it was Estevez throwing to Tomlinson in the endzone from 16 yards after a 63 yard drive. Down 27-0, the Continentals got their offense firing, getting on the board midway through the third quarter, as quarterback Joe (continued on page 14)

(continued from page 13) Cairns '25 completed 34 and 36 yard passes on consecutive plays, followed by a four yard touchdown run by running back Justin Moran '25. Wesleyan's Daniel Yoon kicked a 24 yard field goal with 1:38 to go in the third quarter.

Hamilton's offense came alive in the second half, but it was too late for the Blue and White. Despite Cairns rushing from 5 yards for the Continentals' second touchdown with 11:20 left in the game, Wesleyan held on for the win.

It was a tough loss for Hamilton, but they will take some promising signs away from the game, believes Cairns, who made his first collegiate start Saturday. "Wesleyan was a good football team," he said, "but once we got going in the second half, we showed we can play with and beat anybody." Cairns threw 15 for 21 and recorded 219 passing yards to go along with his rushing touchdown to lead the Hamilton offense. Wide receiver Drew Granski '22 was the focal point of the Continentals' passing game, putting up a career-high 100 yards and six receptions. Will Buddington '22 made a major impact on the game as well, posting 58 receiving yards on four catches. Defensively, the Continentals were led by George Johnson '23, who made 10 tackles, including a first career sack. Mike Cairns '22 and James Ball '22 contributed nine tackles apiece, while Matt LoPresti '23 added to the defensive effort with his first sack. Christian Snell '23 beat the Cardinal line to block an extra-point attempt.

The game was a story of the Cardinals' potent running offense. Wesleyan rushed for 194 of their 419 total yards, led by running back Charlie McPhee, who accounted for 100. Their success on the ground allowed Wesleyan to build a time of possession of 39:37 to Hamilton's 20:14. Hamilton rushed for 31 yards, as opposed to last Saturday's matchup with Bowdoin, when the Continentals ran for 153 yards.

The loss takes the Continentals to 1-1 on the season. The team is back.

COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Athlete Spotlight: Maddie Hong '23

By Owen Lewis '24
SPORTS EDITOR

The women's golf team has consistently scored in the top half of their competitions this season. This past Sunday, they took it up yet another notch, winning the team title at the two-round Cortaca Northeast Invitational. Maddie Hong '23 had a big hand in this success as she was the individual medalist for carding 80 in the first round and 75 in the second. *The Spectator* asked Maddie some questions about her performance, the team atmosphere, and her goals for the future.

You were the individual medalist in Hamilton's win at the Cortaca Northeast Invitational. What clicked for you during that great performance?
My teammates and I were talking about how sometimes a few parts of your game click, but it's rarely everything. On Sunday, my irons and putting were pretty strong, but still my driver game wasn't great the entire round. I think a major part was that I got pretty lucky that I was able to stay out of trouble off the tee and then save myself by getting on the green in regulation.

Do you have a method of coping with the pressure of competition so that you can perform at your best?
Honestly, I try to keep as few thoughts in my head as possible. By now my swing is pretty much muscle memory and overthinking during the round typically just gets me in trouble. Of course there are times where you have to make decisions on different shots, but I usually play my best when I go with my initial thought.

How does your team help each other throughout the season?
I think one of the major ways we help each other is by not letting each other hold onto a bad round. We encourage each other to look forward and focus on things that we can control. Just having that emotional support from my teammates was probably one of the main reasons I was able to turn it around after the Middlebury Tournament.

What are your aspirations for the rest of the season, and what are the team's aspirations?
My goals for the rest of the season are to stay consistent with how I was playing last weekend, keep my irons strong, and hopefully figure out my driver. We are playing a tough course next weekend at Williams, so I believe everyone on the team wants to try to keep scores under 80, and maybe start closing the gap between us and teams like Williams and Amherst.

Some athletes speak about how doing something once gives them the feeling that they can do it again. What kind of confidence does this medal give you?
I definitely feel a little more confident, however, with golf you can be good one weekend and bad the next. Two weekends ago, I had one of my worst tournament rounds, and last weekend I had one of my best tournament rounds, so you really just have to work to be consistent and try not to hold on to a bad round.

Lightning Round

What would you consider the weakest part of your game?
Definitely my sand game. Luckily I didn't go into the sand once on Sunday, which was one of the main reasons I was able to stay away from too many bogeys.

Favorite competition-day meal?
Dunkin' iced coffee and a sausage, egg and cheese wake-up wrap

Best part of being part of the golf team?
I think the best part of being on the golf team is having teammates who will support you when you are playing both well and poorly. Golf is usually such an individual sport, so having a group of people you can debrief with after the round and talk through any problems you faced on the course is extremely helpful.

COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE
Hong '23 in mid-swing en route to an individual medal.

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The Spectator

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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

The vote on the Student Admissions Union

by Nicholas Cackett '24
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

In the most recent chapter of an unprecedented move, student admissions workers at Hamilton College voted on whether to unionize on Friday, Sept. 24th. The election was open to Hamilton tour guides and senior admission fellows, who reported to the polls with a turnout rate of 80 percent. A simple majority is needed for the motion to succeed and allow for negotiations to begin, but results will not be available until Oct. 12th. This is the first time in the nation that undergraduate student workers in admissions have sought union recognition. If it passes, it may set a precedent for other students with similar efforts across the country.

This process began over the summer when a few Hamilton student admissions workers started a committee and contacted the local labor union, the United Food & Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local One. A petition seeking recognition and an election to form a union was then filed by the UFCW on behalf of the Hamilton students to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The students passed the 30 percent threshold the NLRB needed to approve the election, with 50 percent of student admissions workers signing the authorization cards.

Students claim that they all are seeking a working environment where they feel heard and respected, as many admissions workers have complained of a lack of a uniform disciplinary process and low wages. "It was a struggle to get our supervisors to listen to us and take recommendations," said Izzy Rutkey '22, campus tour guide and committee organizer. "We realized there were a lot of shared grievances between us, and it was not just us having individually bad experiences[...]we felt we needed to have a collective bargaining unit that would allow us to have a voice." Other admission workers seem to agree, with Dylan Badillo '23 saying, "they would never hear our suggestions." The campus tour guides and senior admission fellows that support the unionization effort feel that their ideas and concerns are not acknowledged by the Hamilton administration, despite the role they play in helping prospective students to come to Hamilton.

The student workers felt as though this lack of respect was most apparent when the in-person tours were resumed after they had been working remotely. "Last semester, [our bosses] told us we were going to resume in-person tours, without asking for our opinion," said Badillo. "I really did not want to give in-person tours, but I was not getting enough hours and I needed the income." Student-workers believe having a union would give them a way to voice these grievances without the fear of retaliation. As Rutkey noted, "they won't be able to just shut us down and they will have to listen to us as employees. It is important for a workplace to have a boss that will listen to us." Students want to bring up issues such as raising wages and being paid for the entire time they are scheduled, which they feel they cannot do within the current system.

PHOTO BY ERIC MOSS '24
Voting conducted in the Sadove Student Center conference room.

However, not every student involved agrees with this sentiment, and some students expressed doubt with having unions on campus. Some students believe a union is unnecessary and will create needless bureaucracy in the workplace. The union will also require dues that student-workers must pay, something that can cause hesitation among members. Rutkey touched on this, stating, "some people were a little frustrated about having to pay dues, but we would not lose money because the money circulates back to us, we're putting it into this collective beneficial pot that goes back to us".

If a majority of the ballots are in favor of a union, the next step would be to decide on a negotiating committee from among the admissions workers. People could nominate themselves or others, which would be followed by a vote. Once the committee is finalized, it will meet with those assigned to the negotiating committee from Hamilton's Admissions office, alongside a representative from the UFCW Local One. There will be a bargaining stage, which will be ongoing until both sides come to an agreement. Once a deal is struck, it will take effect immediately and members will start paying dues.

Students feel that this election, regardless of whether or not it results in a union, is sure to have an impact on both the school and other undergraduate institutes across the United States. It may open the door to future movements, and it could change undergraduate employment on campuses nationwide.

September 30, 2021

Chapel renovation reaches new heights

by Caitlin Gooding '24
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

While students on campus are finally returning to traditional campus life, one important part of campus has not yet returned to normal. Since Apr. 2021, renovations to the Hamilton College Chapel have been underway, set to be done in late Fall 2021. In early Apr., Director of Building Systems Management William J. Huggins noticed rotting wood on the exterior of the Chapel and went all the way up the steeple to closely investigate. Hamilton College employed Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects to assess the state of the steeple, and from there renovations began. These renovations include a steeple restoration, a new slate roof for the Chapel, repair to the masonry tower, clock and bell, and refurbishment to the dome and quill. The colors of the top of the chapel will also be different upon renovations.

The most efficient approach to renovationing the steeple was to remove the steeple from the top of the Chapel and work on it on the ground. In order to get this done, workers implemented scaffolding around the tower that supported the steeple. By May 12, 2021, Allegrone Companies had meticulously removed the steeple from the top with a crane and transported it down 35 feet to the ground. Work on the steeple commenced on the ground until early Sept., when the steeple finally returned to the top of the Chapel. Despite the large construction site still present, the return of the steeple to the top of the Chapel provides a glimpse of normality.

Prior to this year's renovations, the Chapel has undergone three major renovations since its opening in 1827. The first occurred in 1867 when benches and a furnace were installed. Next, the classrooms were removed in 1897 so that the nave could be open for meetings. Finally, from 1948-1949, the interior was redesigned to resemble a traditional New England Chapel and to honor Hamilton alumni who fought and died in wars. As of today, there is a plaque inscribed with the names of 96 alumni who were victims of the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War and the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. While these were major renovations in themselves, the current renovations are much more extensive and costly.

In total, this round of renovations costs 3.1 million dollars. The College dedicated this amount of money to the Chapel due to its rich history and symbolic significance. The Chapel's original construction was completed in 1827 and was one of the first buildings constructed on campus. Furthermore, it is on the National Register of Historic Places because it is an extremely rare, three-story church. The Chapel is likely the last remaining three-story church of its era in the United States. In 2002, the quilled cupola became a part of the College's logo.

In addition to its historic and emblematic prominence, the Chapel is an integral part of campus members' lives. Students utilize the Chapel for meetings, studying, and hanging out with friends. Jacob Piazza '24 says, "the Chapel was a very important part of my first semester and beginning of second semester until construction started." In particular, he enjoys "the 3rd floor private study room as a quiet and empty space to study and the common area to talk to friends on the phone." Furthermore, Piazza finds the Chapel to be a "building of unique character" and a "very welcoming place."

Piazza, along with many other students, love seeing Chaplain Jeffery McArn when he visits. Piazza says, "Chaplain McArn is very welcoming and I get to see his dog, Lily." Like the rest of campus, Piazza is "very excited for the Chapel to open again sometime soon." Soon, the glorious new steeple will be showcased for everyone to view, and campus members will once again be able to reacquaint themselves with the beautiful space for the first time in eight months.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Renovations on the Chapel to be finished in late fall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Levitt Center Project : *Asians at Hamilton*

by Deanna Durben '25
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Through surveys and interviews, *Asians at Hamilton* is a Levitt Center project that examines the history and current experiences of Asians and Asian Americans at Hamilton College. The original project (now titled "Phase I") was conducted by students Nyaari Kothiya '23, Jason Le '23 and Anna Sakamoto '23 during Winter 2021. The students watched 30+ fiction and non-fiction films about the Asian and Asian American experience in society. Afterwards, they wrote a 95 page paper that analyzed the shared themes of the American Dream, family, the model minority myth, stigma, feeling out of place and transition.

The close links between their analytical findings and their own experiences inspired the trio to continue the project past Phase I. Associate Professor of Japanese Kyoko Omori suggested that the team expand their project. During Summer 2021, 11 students were divided into three teams (History, Statistics and Narratives), and Associate Professor of Literature Pavitra Sundar, Edmund A. LeFevre Professor of English Steven Yao and Professor Omori served as faculty advisors.

During the first two weeks, the student researchers collectively read *Racial Formation in the United States* by Michael Omi and Howard Winant and watched the PBS series *Asian Americans*. Next, they discussed their own experiences through the lens of this new knowledge. Before starting research, each team member wrote a personal narrative essay and shared it with the group. This narrative showed the students that the political, personal, academic and historical aspects of the project were all interconnected. "The slogan 'the personal is political' was very much true for our project," said Rachel Lu '22, a member of the History Team (also known as "Team 1").

The three teams primarily worked independently, but they met nearly every Sunday for discussion. "We had a lot of seamless interweaving between the three projects," said Lu. "We had a huge shared Google Drive, so we could see anytime what Statistics (Team 2) or Narratives (Team 3) was doing." She would regularly check on the other teams' data to avoid unnecessary repetition or to create connections between her work and theirs.

Everyone started working remotely in Summer 2021, but Lu requested to come back to Hamilton halfway through to access the College Archives, as they were not available digitally nor remotely. The team combed through every record from the College's history that mentioned Asians, but information about campus life was scarce. In fact, Lu mostly relied on *The Spectator* archives to find out what happened in the community at various times. According to Lu, recorded events are the ones that shape history, but "it is hard to record racism unless it's a violent act." Additionally, she said that verbal or "minor" incidents are hard to report, and even the word microaggression implies that the violation was no big deal and makes people hesitant to speak up.

Lu strongly identifies as Chinese American, but she worked through a lot of internalized racial conflict in high school. Growing up, she would try to "assimilate into the white neighborhood [she] came from and try to fit in," going so far as to refuse to respond to her parents in Chinese when they spoke to her in that language. Now, she is pursuing a double concentration in Chinese and Literature. Learning more about her culture and the history of Chinese Americans has helped her become comfortable in, and proud of, her identity. "What the project did help me do was understand how important it is to speak out, and that was a big takeaway for me" said Lu.

Lu also discovered that Hamilton was more politically active in the past, especially during the Vietnam War. This discovery made her realize that a small group of students have the potential to mobilize the entire Hamilton community. During her senior year, Lu hopes to "have Asians and Asian Americans speak out more and mobilize together, and for ASU to put on more political events, to make Asian American issues more well-known on this campus."

To quantify and assess Asian and Asian American experiences at Hamilton in the present day, Statistics used the data from a small 2014 focus group on Asian students' satisfaction as a springboard to create their own survey. The 22 question survey (using respective 7-point Likert scales) was sent to students, alumni, faculty and staff in Aug 2021. It received 130 responses. One striking finding was that most students felt that Hamilton was not providing enough support and resources tailored towards Asians and Asian Americans. Although the peak was the neutral option (as most normal distributions are), responses strongly skewed to the "disagree" side, showing that most respondents wish for more support.

Statistics found their biggest limitation to be that the roster of names they could acquire was incomplete, which meant that some voices were inadvertently omitted. Narratives also experienced this issue when they interviewed current students, alumni, and Hamilton employees about their experiences. With no information on ethnicity in the alumni database, Sakamoto did the best she could: she "looked through the alumni directory, and literally just picked out Asian last names." However, Team 3 was ultimately able to to interview 28 alumni, 30 students and 13 employees. Narratives planned specific sets of questions for each group, and conducted 10-20 minute interviews. Afterwards, Sakamoto would replay the recordings and transcribe them word-for-word, enabling her to catch every detail. Inputting summaries of each interview into a Google Form helped the team find the similarities and trends in responses.

What surprised Sakamoto the most was that a lot of people had identity crises during their time at Hamilton, including herself. She explained, "Figuring out what you want to do with your life, figuring out what you want to study, can be really challenging when you're also trying to figure out who you are based on your ethnicity, race and culture."

Whether racially or socioeconomically, "Hamilton is still a very segregated school," she said, explaining that many interviewees ranging from 90s alums to current students had majority POC friend groups during their time here. Sakamoto said that there are certain experiences as a minority that are difficult to explain, and it forms "an invisible wall between you," so that is something one wants to address as a student researcher.

The entire project can be found online at hamiltoncs.org/asians-hamilton/. The website includes a timeline of Asian American history at Hamilton, survey results, and perspectives from current students, alumni and employees.

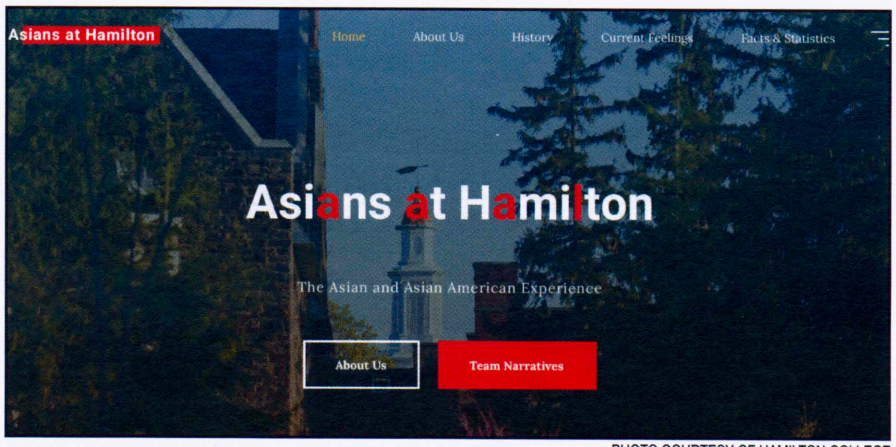

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

To the Hamilton community,

The Spectator will no longer be accepting Letters to the Editor (LTE) on the topic of the student admissions union. We believe the prior LTEs on the topic served their purpose by featuring multiple opinions on the issue. We appreciate the engagement in the LTE space and discussion on the topic. However, as stated in our LTE policy, we want the LTE space to be open to a plethora of debates between members of our community. Therefore, a continuation of this topic would prevent other discussions from being had.

Our policy for LTE is located on the bottom right of this page. Additionally, if we receive a response to an LTE, our practice is to publish the response the following week and not the same week as the original. As a reminder, *The Spectator* has discretion over Letters to the Editor, and LTEs express the opinion of the writer(s), not *The Spectator*. If one wishes to continue writing on the union, we encourage one to reach out to our News or Opinion sections by contacting spec@hamilton.edu, specop@hamilton.edu (Opinion) or specnews@hamilton.edu (News).

Sincerely,
Cole and Emma Mae, Editors-in-Chief

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The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

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About Us

The Hamilton College Spectator, *publication number USPS 612-840, is published weekly by the Hamilton College Student Media Board while classes are in session. For more information e-mail spec@hamilton.edu. Our offices are located on the second floor of the Sadove Student Center. The deadline for advertisements is Monday the week of publication. For further information, please e-mail specads@hamilton.edu.*

Had I Known: an interview with Dave Bolger

by Maeve Sebold '22
STAFF WRITER

By day, Dave Bolger is the Vice President of Consumer Media for the National Football League. By night (and weekends), he is the creator, producer and host of *Had I Known*, a weekly WHCL radio show and podcast that examines the collegiate and professional experiences of some of Hamilton's most notable alumni. The show airs every Sunday at 8 a.m. EST on WHCL-FM, WHCL.org and is available wherever you get podcasts. A Q&A with Bolger elicited the following answers.

When did you start *Had I Known* and why? What inspired you to make it both a podcast and a WHCL radio show?

During the early days of the pandemic, an email was sent to alums of WHCL asking if anyone would be interested in recording radio shows at home to help keep the station on the air. During my time at WHCL, I had multiple shows, was the Sports Director and did the play-by-play for several sports. I loved it so much that I thought it was what I would do for my career. I got a job my senior year at the rock station in Utica, WOUR-FM; I was on the air from 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. most weekends. I was a professional and thought I was on my way. Even though I ended up taking a slightly different career path, the itch to be on the radio never quite went away. The email to alums presented a fun opportunity to finally get back into it.

Given the popularity of podcasts and the ability to reach a broader audience, it made sense to [also] publish the show as a podcast. The podcast platform has allowed members of the Hamilton community to listen anywhere in the world. The show has even been listened to in 62 countries!

How did you choose the name *Had I Known*?

As I thought about the type of show I would do, I did not think many people would be interested in hearing me play music. I do not have much to offer musically that listeners can't find anywhere else. Plus, I know there's only so much Billy Joel people want to hear.

I reflected back on my time at Hamilton and started to wonder if my experience was the same as others. How did it differ? How did my experience compare to alumni from other eras? Then, as I started to think about who I should talk to for the show, I started to appreciate more and more just how many alumni have gone on to do some truly interesting things. I envisioned the show as a fun way for alums to reconnect with the school, while also providing insight and inspiration for current and/or prospective students figuring out their own paths. I think there is something interesting in asking people, as they reflect back over their experiences, if there is anything they wish they had known.

Why did you choose Hamilton and what was your campus involvement?

I thought I was going to play college football and used that as a way to get into the best school possible. Hamilton was the best school, academically, that recruited me, and when I visited, I fell in love with it. Once I got to campus, I decided that I wanted to try more things than just football so I switched to rugby (for some reason, getting tackled without pads seemed smart). I then got involved in WHCL, the Spectator, worked at the Pub, drove the Jitney, wrote press releases for the Sports Information office and I was an RA.

What are the most valuable skills you learned at Hamilton that have helped you in your career?

There's the obvious answer to that question about how a liberal arts education makes you well-rounded in experience and thought. That answer is 100% true. For me, there were also the leadership lessons. I captained the Rugby team during a time when we did not have a coach. The captains were essentially player-coaches. Anyone who leads

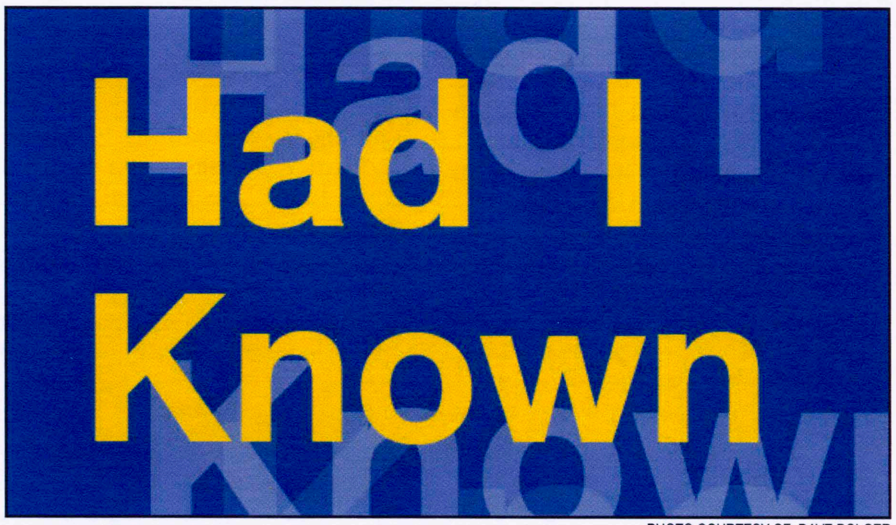


PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE BOLGER

a club or organization at Hamilton is gaining valuable lessons in leadership. The ability to get a group of people, especially a group of peers, moving in the same direction to accomplish a goal is invaluable. That opportunity exists in many places during your four years at Hamilton.

What would you share personally about your Hamilton experience that could help current students?

A common theme on the show that has really been enlightening to me is how every student, when they walk on that campus, is dealing with something. However, there is a fear of showing anything other than a facade that we have it all figured out. I wish I had known that there were many students dealing with the same insecurities I had. I did an episode with a classmate and rugby teammate of mine. He is someone I love dearly, and who remains one of my favorite Hamilton people. In our conversation for the show, he talked about the mental health issues he dealt with as a student. I had no idea. I wish I had known he was struggling so that I could have been a better friend. I fear there are countless stories like that.

In retrospect, what advice would you give a younger you at Hamilton?

It's funny, my mom always told me, 'find a job that makes you happy.' While I always knew that was the right advice, I didn't always think I could afford to follow that advice. A recent guest of the show, award-winning author Chris Holm, talked about how he thought he was supposed to have a career as a scientist, but writing fiction was his passion. With encouragement from his wife (a fellow Hamilton grad), he accepted that writing is what made him happy and wrote a novel. He's now written something like five books with a sixth on the way. So, I guess the lesson is to always listen to your parents and spouses.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE BOLGER

Hamilton Horoscopes

by Mariam Saied '23
Resident Astrologist

Mercury moved into retrograde on Monday, Sept. 27, so if you aren't already feeling its strong effects, you will soon enough. Brace for impact, hang on and just keep moving forwards…

Jan. 20-Feb. 18: Aquarius
February 19-March 20: Pisces
March 21-April 19: Aries
April 20-May 20: Taurus
May 21-June 20: Gemini
June 21-July 22: Cancer
July 23-August 22: Leo
August 23-Sept. 22: Virgo
Sept. 23-Oct. 22: Libra
Oct.23-Nov. 21: Scorpio
Nov. 22-Dec. 21: Sagittarius
Dec. 22-Jan. 19: Capricorn

Aries

It is best to not stretch yourself too thin this week. There will be a lot on your mind, so make sure to be self-aware and keep yourself open to different areas of your life that may need special attention. Make sure to pay attention to your friends. They have a lot going on and will definitely ground you.

Taurus

With Jupiter moving into Aquarius and Venus in Scorpio, we expect you will be adding a creative challenge to your life, but be sure to not blow off other's commitments so you keep your sanity! On that note, make sure you are staying on top of your health and getting enough sleep. You will need it!

Gemini

You may need to spend some more time growing and less time jumping from one thing to another to distract yourself from issues at hand. In classic Gemini fashion, you are always caught between two conflicting ideals. We recommend a night to gather yourself. Spend some quality time journaling and getting in touch with your inner self.

Cancer

Take your relationship to the next level when Venus moves into Pluto, whether it is making a fling official or reaching an important romantic agreement. It will be positive so go for it! But this is not to say there will be no drama, so stick with it, remain true to your heart and trust your significant other.

Leo

Leos! You are going to be really affected as Mercury moves backwards into your communication zone, so be conscious and careful! You may be prone to missing texts, some lost emails here and there and some other technical difficulties. This also applies to your outbound communication, so be careful with your words, and try to say exactly what you mean.

Virgo

Because of (you guessed it) Mercury being in retrograde, your normal thrifty habits will be thrown out of order and you will be inclined to spend, spend, spend! Just keep on top of your finances and you will be okay. Additionally, this weekend, your control will further be put to the test when you have the chance to spend lots of money for a fun activity. Try to set boundaries for yourself and make fun with what you got.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIAM SAIED '23

Libra

This week is going to be a lot for you. Brace yourself. The sun is in Libra until Oct. 23, so be mindful of your relationships. Like the overused phrase states: "treat others the way you want to be treated." Find a balance and attempt to restore any peace in connections that may be feeling rocky. Especially with Mercury being in Libra right now, try to keep your head screwed on and put more time into individual relationships.

Scorpio

Venus is in Scorpio right now, so it might be getting a little spicy in your life. Focus your energy into deep and passionate relationships and try to make real connections. But don't let your relationships consume you right now. Make sure to hold yourself back before letting your "all or nothing" energy take you down. Don't let jealousy or the fear of betrayal fog your emotions. Ride on that love high.

Sagittarius

Trust yourself and trust those around you. You've been feeling uneasy and fearful, but don't let that bog you down. Don't keep everything in, especially any secret desires you've been itching to let out. Make the most of what you have, spend some time exploring what you love and don't let the stress get to you.

Capricorn

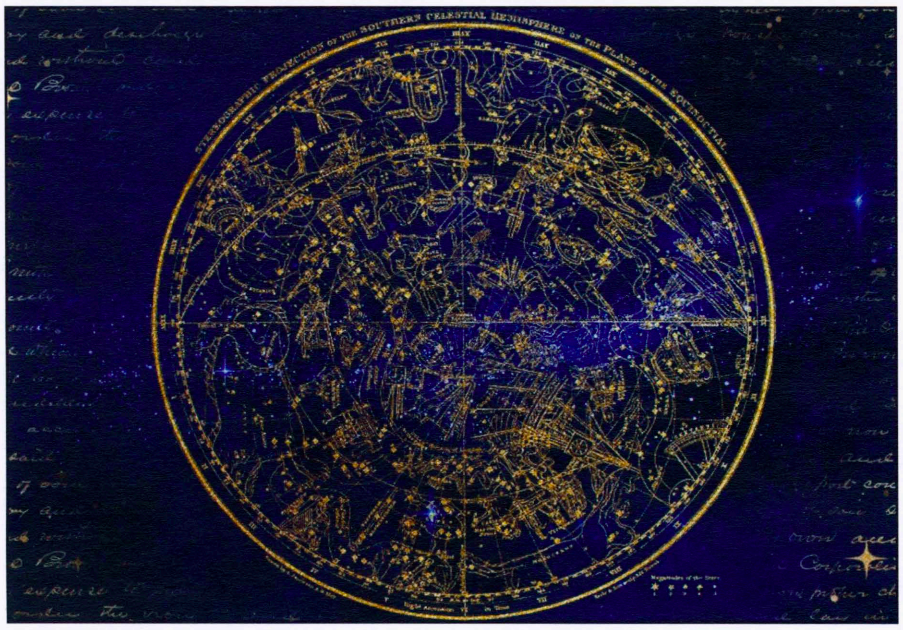
Take your time before making any hasty or rash decisions about the people in your life. Be sure of what you believe, and don't let the spur of the moment impact your choices. Stay positive and make sure to check yourself before you wreck yourself. Spend some time repairing those friendships that are tearing and be honest with yourself. Work towards a general happiness.

Aquarius

Make mistakes and move on. You're feeling insecure right now, so work on your communication with yourself and those around you. Find something you're passionate about and invest yourself. This is your time to be motivated and get stuff done. Try to gain some clarity to improve your relationships and make the most of what's around you.

Pisces

Don't let the tension get to you. Learn from what pushes your buttons and recognize your own personal boundaries. This may allow you to be more motivated and work on what ticks you off. Get involved in a passion project and let your creative juices flow. Team work makes the dream work.



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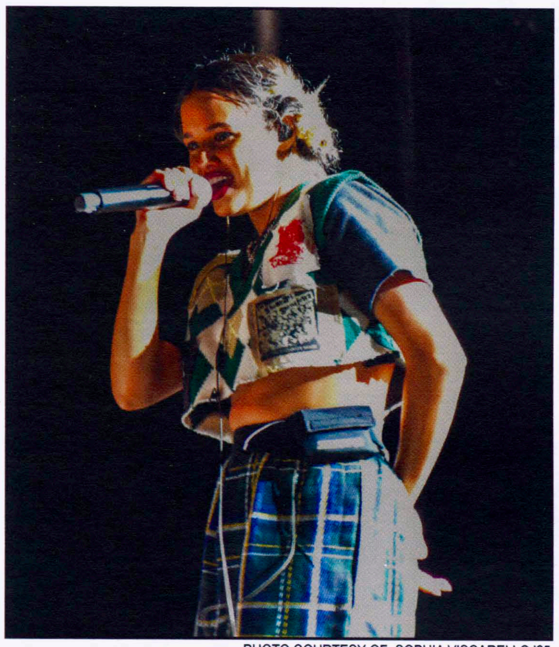

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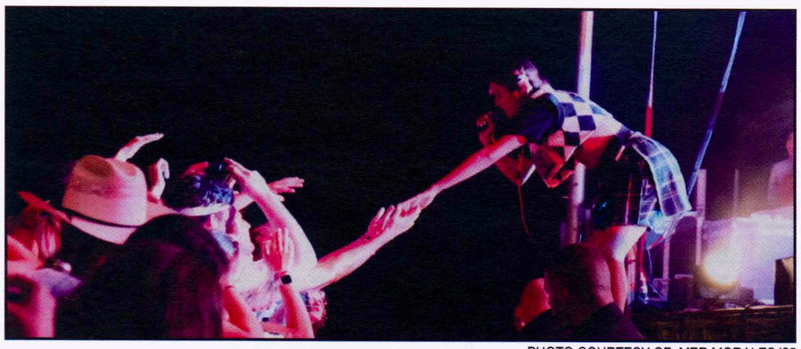
After a whole year with no in-person concerts, Campus Activities Board (CAB) kicked off the 2021-2022 academic year with Ham Jam, headlined by Snakehips with opener Tommy Genesis. The energy and size of the crowd reflected the anticipation for and success of the show. Both students and performers alike were estatic to get back to in-person shows, and the artists were also excited for the traveling that comes with it. Tommy loved being on the Hamilton campus, and even gave some consideration to the Light Side/ Dark Side divide, which she likened to Twilight: vampires on the Dark Side and werewolves on the Light Side. Snakehips had similar impressions, believing that Bristol is haunted (but not too haunted), and expressed that they wanted to come back and be honorary graduates/students of Hamilton.



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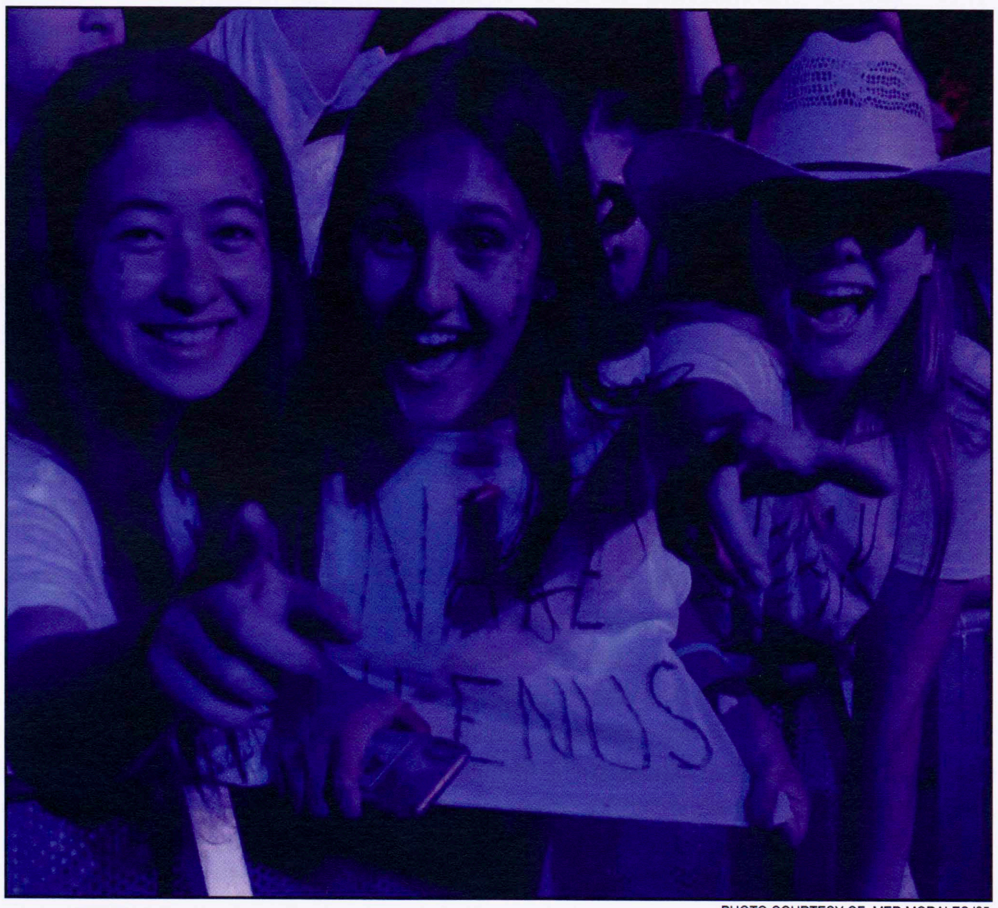

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September 30, 2021

How pragmatism and an ignorance of ideology doomed the War on Terror

by William (Will) Rampe '24
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

The recent controversy surrounding the evacuation of Afghanistan and the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks has brought the legacy of the United States' "War on Terror" into the spotlight. The U.S.'s final withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan on Aug. 30 ended the longest war in its history. However, the 13 U.S. service members killed in the ISIS bombing near Hamid Karzai airport only a few days before the final evacuation and abundance of military equipment left behind has dampened any positive feelings that could come from this evacuation.

While President Biden rightly shouldered most of the blame for this evacuation, any criticism should be bipartisan. It was former President Trump who signed a deal with the Taliban in Doha, Qatar, beginning the withdrawal and releasing Taliban prisoners. A majority of these prisioners then took up arms against the Afghan government in return for the Taliban's promise to stop attacks on U.S. forces.

In the 2003 National Strategy to Combat Terrorism, the Bush administration declared its central objectives to stopping the war on terror. "The intent of our national strategy," it stated, "is to stop terrorist attacks against the United States, its citizens, its interests, and our friends and allies to create an international environment inhospitable to terrorists and all those who support them." These objectives have mostly failed, despite only about 100 Americans dying from Salafist attacks in the U.S. since 2001. This is demonstrated by the fall of the allied government of Afghanistan and the continued persistence of other terrorist-supporting regimes.

This failure of the war on terror is not surprising. In fact, U.S. policy in the Middle East during the last two decades failed to even attempt to achieve the goals espoused in its strategy to combat terrorism.

The U.S. fought jihadist ideology with geopolitical pragmatism, failing to truly attack the true sources of terrorism and in some cases, even supporting these sources before and during the War on Terror itself.

An infamous example of this support for jihadism is Operation Cyclone, where the U.S. supported the Mujahideen with weapons during the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This policy was largely bipartisan and popular at the time, given the fact that these weapons were going to "freedom fighters" who were resisting a communist occupation of their homeland. However, much of these weapons and funding, originally funneled through the Pakistani Intelligence Service (ISI) to the Mujahideen, eventually ended up in the hands of the Taliban.

The U.S.'s support of jihadists and its failure to prevent an Islamic fundamentalist movement from gaining weapons from Pakistan represents the pragmatism within its geopolitical strategy. The fear of Afghanistan becoming a Soviet satellite led the Reagan administration, Congress and U.S. military intelligence to overlook American ideals of liberty and individualism in favor of supporting religious fundamentalists against what they perceived as a greater threat.

One of the most damning demonstrations of this in Afghanistan is the printing of textbooks by the U.S. depicting violent images and militant Islamic teachings for Afghan children, to foment resistance against the Soviets. This policy continued after the U.S. invasion with the distribution of four million textbooks emphasizing Muslim tenents. The corruption in the funding and implementation of the post-Taliban Afghan government further exemplifies the U.S. abandoning liberal ideals in favor of immediate pragmatism.

This ignorance of ideology and lack of understanding of its consequences disrupted America's ability to truly fight terrorism because it does not allow it to fight the ideals and conditions that create terrorists in the first place.

Canadian-American philosopher Leonard Peikoff predicted this issue in a *New York Times* piece written less than a month after the 9/11 attacks titled "End States Who Sponsor Terrorism." In this article, Peikoff highlights the primary motivation for the intellectual impotence against attacking jihadist ideology, stating that "the Muslim countries embod[y] in an extreme form every idea—selfless duty, anti-materialism, faith or feeling above science, the supremacy of the group—which our universities, our churches, and our own political Establishment had long been upholding as virtue."

To summarize Peikoff's point, the reason the U.S. is unable to fight terrorism is because the basis of their funadmentalist ideas are opposed pragmatically as opposed to ideologically, and even this occurs only in certain cases (e.g. continued U.S. support for the Saudi regime despite their Wahhabist ideology).

This fact holds true to this day and should be evident to anyone who has been subjected to anti-individualist COVID-19 lockdowns and other regulations, as well as the rise of religious fundamentalism and a disregard for science in the form of anti-abotion legislation and vaccine hesitancy.

This point is not to equate the extent of collectivistic ideals and their consequences within the U.S. to those in fundamentalist nations, whose conditions are obviously much worse. Rather, this demonstrates that the anti-individualist and anti-liberty ideology that allows these policies to exist in the U.S. also prevents terrorism from being defeated on ideological grounds.

The reality is that we as Americans have hated terrorism because of the threat it poses to us, not for the ideological basis it stands on. This leaves us unable to actually defeat terrorism during the war on terror, despite attacking and killing many of its most prominent promoters.

In order to fight terrorism in the long run, the U.S. must both advocate for ideals of individualism and liberty at home and promote them abroad. A foreign-policy defined by pragmatism or that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" cannot sustain any positive lasting results; the basis for the first enemy still being an enemy remains.

Policy-wise, the Biden administration and any future administrations should promote the severing of any ties, whether diplomatic, economic, or military, with religious fundamentalists states.

In terms of Afghanistan and any other nation that promotes or supports terrorism, the U.S. should pursue military options to the fullest extent to prevent these terrorists from posing any threat to Americans, whether home or abroad.